

# 2010 DOC Watershed Coordinator Grant Program

## Quarterly Report (11)

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Grant number: 3010-238

Grantee name and contact information: Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners (TBWP)

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Watershed name(s) + HUC(s): Tulare-Buena Vista Lakes 18030012

and location(s) [counties]: Fresno, Tulare, Kings and Kern Counties

State Senate District number(s): 12, 14, 16, 18

Senators(s): Canella, Berryhill, Vidak, Fuller

State Assembly District number(s): 23, 26, 31, 32, 34

Assembly Member(s): Patterson, Conway, Perea, Salas, Grove

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Quarterly Reporting Period: 11/19/13-02/18/13

Report submission date:

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Refer to the *DOC Watershed Coordinator Grant Program Quarterly Report Form Instructions* document for detailed directions on how to complete this form.

### **1. Executive Summary:**

The goal of the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partner's Watershed Initiative (TBWI) is a healthy regional watershed with ecologically functional waterways, wetlands and uplands, providing abundant clean water for both people and wildlife. The Initiative will promote integrated natural resource management in the Tulare Basin watershed. The Initiative's main objective is to ensure that water supply, water quality and flood control practices funded and carried out through the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) process consider and incorporate ecological, watershed and sustainability principles in project design. The Watershed Coordinator (WC) will lead outreach efforts to the seven Tulare Basin IRWM planning groups and will work closely with natural resources agencies and non-profit organizations operating in the Basin.

In order to meet the Initiative's three-year objectives, the WC will utilize the TBWP's conservation planning documents, the Tulare Basin Conservation Plan Water Supply Strategies Report, and appropriate state and federal land managing agency planning documents to determine overlap with the objectives and priorities in the various Tulare Basin IRWM plans. The overall goal of this effort is to add environmental value and enhance funding opportunities for IRWM and other water-related projects in the Basin.

Objectives for the WC will also include improving overall public and stakeholder involvement for organizations not currently represented in IRWM groups. This includes the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Resource Conservation Districts (RCD) and other conservation or civic organizations active in the Basin. The Initiative will work to bring state, federal and private resources to facilitate the funding of these projects. The Initiative will also work to secure funding for the continuation and long-term sustainability of the WC functions after the end of this grant.

**2. Activities and Accomplishments Summary:** List major activities and accomplishments completed this quarter.

As the activity under this Watershed Coordinator Grant is entering the final quarter of the initial three-year segment, California and the Tulare Basin are experiencing a devastating drought. This is the third winter of below average rainfall and correlating snow pack in the Sierra Nevada. Water allocations from the state and federal water projects are at an all time low and groundwater overdraft is a critical resource issue. Since the initiation of the TBWI, the Tulare Basin has continued to experience land conversion of marginal farm ground and/or native habitat for threatened and endangered species to more salt tolerant crops, particularly pistachio orchards which have a tremendous demand on water supplies already in short supply. Partners in the TBWI are part of the dialogue at local and state levels. The continued over drafting of groundwater without the necessary replenishment from snow melt is one of the more critical resource issues facing the region at this time. Under Phase 2, the TBWI, in collaboration with the State Water Action Plan and local interests, aims to achieve significant progress toward regional sustainability. The long-term goal is the development of infrastructure and water management that not only benefit water supply and water quality, but also create ecosystem benefits through projects that are vital for the health of agriculture, communities, and wildlife in the Tulare Basin Watershed.

During this quarter, the TBWI partners stepped up efforts to secure funding for the continuation of the work initiated with this grant in May 2011. A survey is underway to gain feedback from our partners to strengthen and focus the Phase 2 efforts of 2014 – 2016.

Priority Actions/Focus:

*The priorities from the Annual Work Plan for Year 3 with Q11 accomplishments:*

*(1) Development and integration of conservation, habitat and climate change project elements into the planning/implementation grant applications of the seven Tulare Basin IRWM groups to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR):*

- The WC and Core team members participated in the TB IRWM Collaboration Group monthly meetings.

- The WC continued to participate in meetings regarding the IRWM Strategic Vision.
- The WC provided recommendation to DWR IRWM team to add scoring advantage to projects that provide ecosystem benefits in the Round 3 Implementation grant program.

*(2) Deer Creek Watershed Focus Area and Southwestern Tulare County Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) Integrated Resource Management:* In an ongoing effort to identify opportunities and execute projects in the Southwestern region of Tulare County (Deer Creek Watershed), the TBWI Core Team continues to engage community leaders and other stakeholders in the region.

- The TBWI COS coordinated the publication of the third Alpaugh-Allensworth Bulletin, released on February 5, 2014. It is a small community newsletter intended to help inform and bring together the communities of Alpaugh and Allensworth. The COS solicited content from community members, edited the articles, formatted the newsletter, and facilitated distribution of the newsletter on Monday, February 5, 2014. United Way of Tulare County translated the content to Spanish and the TBWI COS formatted the English and Spanish versions. (See the newsletter, included on the enclosed CD.)
- The TBWI has nearly completed the development of its “Rural Communities Resource Center,” an online tool for DACs and the nonprofits/agencies with whom they work. The development of this new section on the TBWI website is funded Pacific Gas and Electric Company.
- The TBWI COS has been working with the BLM Project Manager for Atwell Island to increase visitor usage of the public lands. The COS designed a poster and flyer for a monthly guided birding tour of Atwell Island. (See poster in the enclosed CD.)
- As a result of a spring 2013 survey of TBWG members, the TBWI team has formed four subcommittees to address priority issues on a deeper level. Following is a summary of these subcommittees and associated activities and meetings:
  - Identifying and increasing water supply for Tulare Basin wetlands: The first meeting was held on Nov. 19, 2013 at the Angiola Water District Headquarters in Corcoran. Specific problems related to endangered species habitat flooding, the unknown condition of SW Tulare County levees, and a lack of governance structure for a portion of the SW Tulare County region.
  - Connecting downstream water users with upper watershed managers: The first meeting is planned for February 25 at the Pacific Southwest Research Station in Fresno. Over 40 upper watershed land managers and water stakeholders have been invited.
  - Outreach to county land use planners and elected officials in Fresno, Tulare, Kings and Kern counties: The spring Tulare Basin Working Group (TBWG) meeting is scheduled for May 1. It will include a tour of Kern National Wildlife Refuge and neighboring duck clubs. The topic will be environmental water supplies during the drought; the tour and subsequent meeting will target elected officials.
  - Continuation of the rural communities regional capacity-building effort led by the COS: This latter effort has been underway for more than a year; it is focusing on increasing DAC community leadership capacity through roundtable discussions, community newsletters, and the AAA Trails project.
- The Pixley Conservation Project, funded through a grant from the US Bureau of Reclamation’s (BOR) Central Valley Project Conservation Program (CVPCP) awarded

in 2012, continued to progress with appraisal of the properties by the USFWS Realty Office in Sacramento. The project is proceeding in the context of concern expressed by agency and non-governmental organization representatives that land prices in the region are skyrocketing as a result of rapid conversion of marginal farmland, and valuable native habitat, to high value crops such as pistachios. Investment groups from outside the area are purchasing tracts of land throughout the Tulare Basin and pumping groundwater to produce the more salt tolerant nut tree.

*(3) Southern Sierra IRWMP development.*

- The WC participated in the Southern Sierra Regional Water Management Group (SS RWMG) Coordinating Committee and Planning Committee meetings to guide the development of the SS RWMG IRWM plan. The WC also participated on the goals and objectives subcommittee with representatives for the CDFW and the Southwest Forest Research Station. The final plan will be submitted to DWR by November 2014. Completion of the plan is critical to submitting proposals for Round 3 IRWM implementation grants in 2015.

*(4) Climate Change Science, Adaptation and Resiliency.*

- On behalf of TBWP, the WC developed a Scope of Work (SOW) Liberty Ranch Climate Adaptation Project and submitted it to DWR on January 23, 2014 (see enclosed CD). Given considerable interest by both BOR and DWR in developing a water storage project (South of the Delta) in the San Joaquin Valley and along tributaries of the Diablo Range, the WC worked with potential partners and funders to identify funding for a feasibility study; the study is needed to explore and recommend phases for the project. Engineering and design, water rights, and land acquisition are some of the issues that must be addressed in the proposed feasibility study. The TBWP is in the process of developing local support and sponsorship for the study.
- The AWC is organizing an “upstream/downstream” Watershed Connections” collaboration group (a TBWG subcommittee) based on the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) Headwaters Policy and the Mokelumne watershed risk analysis project. The initial meeting is planned for February 25, 2014 at the US Forest Service Southwest Research Station office in Fresno.

*(5) Communication and Outreach implementation: serving as a catalyst for the integration of landscape level conservation through water management strategies geared to provide water supply reliability for agriculture, communities, and habitat in the Tulare Basin.*

- The TBWI COS, with input from the TBWI team, designed an online survey that was distributed on February 14. The aim of the survey is to solicit feedback from TBWI partners and stakeholders about our activities and accomplishments through the three-year DOC grant period and to seek guidance on where/how to focus our efforts in the next phase of our work. We look forward to analyzing the survey results and reporting our analysis to the DOC in our final report. (The survey is available online at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/YLXZHNN>. Survey questions are also available on the enclosed CD.)
- During this quarter, the TBWI COS distributed two e-newsletters to the e-newsletter list-serve, which has grown to 224 subscribers. Our January 21 e-newsletter, dedicated to the California drought, received the highest viewership rate of our 12 distributions to date – 48% – which is more than double the industry average of 21.3%. Our click rate was 23% (10 times higher than the industry average of 2.7%, and ten percentage points higher than

our own average list average of 12%). (See enclosed CD for pdfs of the newsletters; subscribe to newsletters at: <http://eepurl.com/sXK-b>.)

- The TBWI website is located at [www.tularebasinwatershed.org](http://www.tularebasinwatershed.org). It serves a uniquely valuable role as a tool to assist project managers in developing watershed projects and initiatives in the Tulare Basin. The COS has been working with a website developer to add a new section to the TBWI website (which serves DACs) and also to upgrade the entire website. The new section and site upgrade will be launched in the upcoming quarter and will be detailed in our next report to DOC.
- THE TBWI COS also worked on a major website upgrade to the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners website: [www.tularebasinwildlifepartners.org](http://www.tularebasinwildlifepartners.org). The site offers a great overview of the hydrology, history, habitats, species, and recreation/education opportunities in the Tulare Basin. The site also hosts the TBWP's four conservation plans and a conceptual project list that recommends Basin-wide integrated resource management projects that can be facilitated by the TBWI Team.
- The TBWI COS also routinely updates the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/tularebasinwildlifepartners>.

*(6) West Hills Integrated Resource Management (IRM) in partnership with the Westside RCD (WRCD).*

- The WC took the lead in the preparation and submission of a \$197,500 grant application to the BOR CVP Habitat Restoration (HR) Program for restoration of riparian habitat in the Arroyo Pasajero portion of western Fresno County in collaboration with the WRCD. The application is under review and ranking by BOR and a funding decision should be made by April 2014.
- The WC attended the November 21 WRCD meeting and field tour of the sites proposed for restoration in the CVPHR grant.
- As a result of the overarching concerns with drought and the decline in revenues to water districts that sponsor the WRCD, the development of the West Hills RMP has been delayed. A general outline was developed with several members of the RCD board and manager in December 2013.
- The WC has been working with the WRCD on the merger of WRCD and Tranquility RCD in Western Fresno County. Both of these RCDs include high value conservation lands including the Alkali Scrub Ecological Reserve, Mendota Wildlife Area, Arroyo Pasajero and several WRP wetlands adjacent to the North Fork of the Kings River.

*(7) Secure ongoing funding to continue the work of the Tulare Basin Watershed Coordinator beyond the initial three-year Department of Conservation (DOC) grant.*

- In October 2013, the TBWP Executive Director (ED) submitted a Letter of Inquiry (LOI) to the California Water Foundation (CWF) for continued funding for the work of the Tulare Basin WC for a thirty-six month period after the end of this DOC grant (@ \$300,000). In January and February 2014 the TBWP ED updated the LOI with information about the addition of David Clendenen/Vollmar Natural Lands Consulting as WC Co-share consultant with a defined work plan and one-year budget for the period July 2014 – June 2015, to enable the WC Co-Share Team to continue their efforts through IRWM Round 3 at a minimum. The TBWI has been invited to discuss the updated LOI on March 3, 2014 with Kate Williams, CWF Program Manager.
- In December, the TBWI team was awarded a \$19,000 grant in response to an application submitted to the Fresno Regional Foundation (FRF) in September 2013 to fund the TBWP-TBWI Land Use and Natural Resources Integration (LUNRI) program. The grant

will fund county outreach efforts with the four Tulare Basin counties (Kern, Tulare, Kings and Fresno). The TBWI team intends to advocate for the inclusion of TBWP and Greenprint land use planning data and Kings Basin groundwater recharge data into county land use planning efforts.

### **Benefits to the Watershed Accrued in Quarter 11 by TBWI and Partners**

The TBWI WC and team have provided a significant return on the DOC investment through the three-year Watershed Coordinator grant awarded to the TBWP in 2011. In addition to the direct benefits of technical assistance in project design and implementation, grant writing, and facilitation services, the WC and Core Team members have leveraged DOC grant dollars for specific program activities and projects through state, federal and private sources. (See Table 1, which indicates that the TBWP has almost tripled the original \$300,000 DOC investment through successful attraction of complementary funding.) Projects include acquisition of important conservation lands; watershed restoration; outreach and education to communities, elected officials and lands use planners; and website development for information transfer. Additionally, Tulare Basin Working Group (TBWG) focus groups have been established by the TBWI/TBWG regarding water and habitat management, climate change, land use planning and land protection.

The TBWI has been very successful throughout the grant period to date in building new partnerships.

#### *New Tulare Basin multi-benefit projects; status since last report on “new ventures”:*

- The WC assisted the WRCD with the submission of a Habitat Restoration grant under the provisions of CVPIA “b- 1- other” in October 2013. The BOR and USFWS attended the November board meeting of the WRCD to discuss the grant program. A site visit followed the board meeting to several locations on the Western Fresno County “stream groups.” The vision for this project is a multi-agency partnership with private landowners that will span the upper watershed to the floor of the Southern San Joaquin Valley. Its purposes will be to improve rangeland, reduce flooding and deposition of sediments (including selenium) into stream courses and wetlands, restore riparian vegetation and enhance pollinator habitat. As mentioned previously, the WC submitted a \$197,500 grant application to the CVPCP/HR in October in collaboration with the WRCD. The project is still under review. A funding decision is expected in April and will be included in our next report under this DOC Watershed Grant.

#### *Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) water projects:*

- The TBWI continued to engage in and monitor the efforts of the newly launched Steering Committee for the AAA (Alpaugh-Allensworth-Atwell Island) Project, a feasibility study funded by a grant from the Strategic Growth Council to the Allensworth Progressive Association to assess options for transferring water from the Angiola Water District to the communities of Alpaugh and Allensworth. The TBWI is working with the Steering Committee to make sure that conservation, habitat, and recreation components will be factored into the design and implementation plan of the feasibility study. The primary goal of this water transfer project is to bring clean water from Angiola to Alpaugh and Allensworth, in exchange for the communities’ arsenic-tainted water.

*Raising awareness about IRM and its benefits in the Tulare Basin:*

- The WC participated on the Steering Committee for the SJV Greenprint, thereby continuing to build relationships with other Valley groups interested in pursuing watershed-based IRM.
- The TBWI e-newsletters (distributed approximately every four weeks) serve as a digital means of keeping partners connected and committed to IRM in the Tulare Basin. Our January issue focused on California's drought emergency and provided a good overview of the crisis, with attention to details that inform our partners and stakeholders as they plan and implement their own responses to the epic dry conditions. The drought calls the region's attention to the need for more integrated resource management. (See the enclosed CD for PDFs of the two e-newsletters distributed in Quarter 11.)
- The newly redesigned TBWP website ([www.tularebasinwildlifepartners.org](http://www.tularebasinwildlifepartners.org)) was launched in December. The new site will help resource managers in the Tulare Basin better access the wealth of research and resources about Tulare Basin hydrology, species, habitats and unique planning efforts. No other organization hosts such breadth and depth of information about Tulare Basin ecology.

*Expanding the TBWI network of partners:* As a result of a survey conducted by the AWC and COS after the May 2013 TBWG meeting, focus groups have been established based on the interests of the TBWG participants. The goal of these focus groups is to convene and discuss challenging resource issues facing partners in the Tulare Basin. One focus group met in the fall of 2013 to discuss opportunities to enhance wetlands through use of existing infrastructure, such as conveyance and storage facilities to move storm water or other water supplies when available. There was a keen interest on the part of this focus group in management of CDFW Ecological Reserves where flooding can impact upland endangered species. As mentioned above, another focus group addressing climate change and watershed connections is meeting -- on February 25, 2014.

*Collaborating for a healthy upper watershed:*

- TBWI Core Team member John Shelton (DFW) and the WC continue to participate on the Sierra Water Work Group (SWWG). The WC participated in the annual meeting at the headquarters of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, in Auburn, CA on January 28, 2014.
- As previously mentioned, the AWC is coordinating a meeting on February 25, 2014 to discuss improving communication and collaboration among upper watershed managers, foothill and valley water stakeholders in the Tulare Basin. The AWC is working with Michelle Selmon/DWR Climate Change Specialist, and representatives from Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park Service, Sequoia National Forest, Tulare Basin IRWM groups and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC). SNC is completing a report examining the connection between upper watershed management and downstream water yield and quality. The AWC is also working with the ACWA headwaters subcommittee, which is developing implementation measures for its *Policy Principles for Improved Management of California's Headwaters*.

*San Joaquin Valley Recovery Team (SJVRT):*

- Several members of the TBWI Core Team continue to participate on the SJVRT to develop a GIS map that will evaluate the protection needs of "gap" recovery areas and habitat linkages identified in the Recovery Plan. SJVRT and TBWI Core Team members are also coordinating with the GIS team from the San Joaquin Valley Greenprint to ensure that the two mapping efforts are complementary.

**Completed performance measures (PMs) as listed in work plan.** Identify the completed PMs for this quarter.

**Watershed Goal:** The goal of the Tulare-Buena Vista Lakes Watershed Coordinator is to create a healthy regional watershed with ecologically functional waterways, wetlands and uplands, providing abundant clean water for both people and wildlife. The Watershed Coordinator (WC) will cooperate with the seven Tulare Basin IRWM groups and with the Tulare Basin Working Group (TBWG) to promote integrated natural resource management in the Tulare Basin Watershed (in Fresno, Tulare, Kings, and Kern Counties).

**Work Plan Objective #1: Identify environmental benefits that can be added to specific IRWM water projects, adding environmental value and enhancing funding opportunities for these projects, as well as providing the following end result benefit to the watershed: conceptualization and implementation of projects emanating from relevant conservation plans that provide strategically located wetland, riparian and upland wildlife habitat.**

*Performance Measurement:* Facilitate the development and implementation of up to 14 environmental projects from TBWP and public agency planning documents that can add environmental value to IRWM projects.

Completed measures and outcomes addressed:

- The WC and TBWI Core Team members attended meetings of the six active Tulare Basin IRWM groups and attended monthly meetings of the Tulare Basin IRWM Collaboration Group (TB IRWVG). (Task 1.2)
- The WC also served as a communication conduit between the Southern Sierra RWMG and the Kings Basin Water Association (KBWA). (Task 1.2)
- The TBWG water supply for wetlands subgroup met November 19 at the Angiola Water District office in Corcoran. The group discussed priority projects, including the storm water management on the White River which runs through the Allensworth Ecological Reserve. This area is within the Lower Tule IRWMP, but that IRWM group has not to date been actively developing a plan or projects under the DWR IRWM framework. (Task 1.2)

**Work Plan Objective #2: Match IRWM and other projects that have environmental benefits to grant opportunities and work to bring state, federal, and private resources to facilitate the funding of these projects, with the end result benefit to the watershed of increased fundability of IRWM water projects as well as providing additional valuable habitat for wetland, riparian, and upland wildlife species through these integrated projects.**

*Performance Measurement:* Facilitate the preparation by IRWM cooperators of 12-36 funding proposals that add environmental benefits to IRWM projects.

Completed measures and outcomes addressed:

- TBWI Team members explored and shared a variety of grant opportunities, including potential funding from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Proposition 1E, Local Groundwater Assistance (LGA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and private foundations. Relevant grant opportunities and deadlines are posted on the TBWI website and sent out in e-newsletters to a mailing list of 224 subscribers (IRWM and TBWG partners). (Task 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)
- TBWI team members received regular newsletters listing grant opportunities from the San Joaquin Valley Rural Development Center at Fresno State. This information is routinely added to our TBWI website Funding Information Section and distributed to our partners. (Tasks 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)

**Work Plan Objective #3: Coordinate with Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) and the San Joaquin Valley Resource Conservation & Development (RC & D) Council as well as with other conservation and civic organizations not currently represented in IRWM groups to promote consideration of resources other than water (e.g. soil, air, open space, recreation, and wildlife) in IRWM projects; the end result benefit of this objective will be increased public involvement that will lead in turn to increased benefits from the IRWM water projects for a wider array of the public, enhancing the regional agricultural heritage, economy, and quality of life.**

*Performance Measurement:* Facilitate development and implementation of up to 12 IRWM projects that integrate benefits to soil, air, open space, recreation, wildlife and other resources.

Completed measures and outcomes addressed:

- As previously mentioned, the WC developed the CVPCP/HRP grant application in collaboration with WRCD. The full title of the application is “Riparian Restoration on the Western Fresno County Stream Groups, Arroyo Pasajero, Salt-Martinez, Cantua and Panoche Creeks.” In addition to WRCD, project partners include NRCS, Fresno State, BOR, USFWS, and the TBWP. The proposal was accepted for review, ranking and potential funding by the BOR program manager. The WC participated in the November 21, 2013 site visit by CVPCP/HR program managers from BOR and FWS. (Task 3.1, 3.2, 3.3; also Objectives 4 and 6)
- The WC participated on the SJV Greenprint Steering committee under its Phase 1 grant funded by the SGC. (Task 3.2, 3.3)
- The WC participated on the San Joaquin Valley Committee for Sustainable Conservation, an umbrella group of nonprofit organizations working with agricultural interests on regional solutions to improve water supply and water quality in the San Joaquin Valley. (Tasks 3.2, 3.3)
- The WC continued collaboration with the San Joaquin River Stewardship Council, Tree Fresno, and Urban Tree Foundation to develop community-building projects involving natural resources such as tree plantings and environmental education events. (Tasks 3.2, 3.3)

**Work Plan Objective #4: Coordinate with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to assist implementation of Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) and other NRCS programs; the end result benefit of this objective to the watershed will be additional**

**wetland and riparian projects funded by NRCS and increased acreage of these essential wildlife habitats.**

*Performance Measurement:* Identification and implementation of up to 12 WRP and other NRCS program projects in conjunction with IRWM projects.

Completed measures and outcomes addressed:

- The NRCS Southern WRP Implementation Team Leader participated on the TBWI Core Team and routinely provided guidance on NRCS programs and outreach opportunities. (Tasks 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)
- The WC and TBWI Core Team continued to place a strong focus on the tasks of identifying water and funding sources for water for WRP lands in the Tulare Basin that do not currently have water. The task is linked to flood management activities, particularly the evolving White River flood management on the Allensworth Ecological Reserve and potentially on the South Fork of the Kings River to Liberty Ranch. (Task 4.2)
- The NRCS Fresno Office collaborated with the TBWI and WRCD on the Arroyo Pasajero project in western Fresno County submitted to BOR for CVPCP grant funding. (Task 4.2)
- The AWC organized the November 19 meeting of the TBWG water supply for wetlands subgroup. The TBWG envisions this subgroup as a permanent collaboration of Tulare Basin water managers and environmental water stakeholders to (1) identify, locate and summarize environmental water supply needs, (2) brainstorm water supply ideas, and (3) discuss potential projects in the Tulare Basin with an initial focus on southwest Tulare County. Water supply for WRP wetlands is a high priority for this subgroup, although all environmental water needs for that region will continue to be discussed. Representatives from NRCS, BLM, Ducks Unlimited, Tulare Basin Wetlands Association, California Waterfowl Association, USFWS, CDFW, Angiola Water District and TBWP participated. (Task 4.2)

**Work Plan Objective #5: Coordinate with disadvantaged community interests to identify specific overlap between those interests and environmental interests and work to integrate both components into specific IRWM water projects; the end result benefit of this objective is that IRWM water projects will demonstrate increased synergy between wildlife needs and open space needs of people living in disadvantaged communities.**

*Performance Measurement:* Facilitate the integration of up to six projects that provide environmental benefits for disadvantaged communities in IRWM water projects.

Completed measures and outcomes addressed:

- The WC participated on the Tulare Basin wide boundary workgroup to determine methods to include all the DAC's into IRWM boundaries to enhance their consideration for IRWM implementation grants. (Tasks 5.1, 5.2, 5.3)
- WC invited to participate on Kings Basin IRWM boundary and DAC workgroup meeting in late February 2014. (Tasks 5.1, 5.2, 5.3)
- As previously described, the COS is working with a website developer to launch the Rural Communities Resource Center, a new section that will be added to the TBWI

website ([www.tularebasinwatershed.org](http://www.tularebasinwatershed.org)). This section will be dedicated to serving the needs of DACs and targeted to Community Services Districts and other DAC governance entities or nonprofits that have the authority to develop projects in rural communities for watershed-improvement activities. PG&E granted the TBWI \$5,000 to conduct this work. (Note: As the TB IRWM and TB DAC groups are well aware, there is great potential for DACs to benefit from the State IRWM program which incentivizes projects that include solutions to DAC water supply and quality problems.) (Tasks 5.2, 5.3)

**Work Plan Objective #6: Provide riparian and wildlife corridor concepts to assist IRWM groups with integration of climate change adaptation and sustainability strategies into specific IRWM water projects; the end result benefit to the watershed is that IRWM water projects will include climate change adaptation and sustainability benefits that will provide movement corridors for plants and animals and fewer species will be extirpated from portions of their ranges and listed as threatened or endangered.**

*Performance Measurement:* Integrate up to 12 TBWP corridor project concepts or project components with climate change adaptation and sustainability benefits into specific IRWM water projects.

Completed measures and outcomes addressed:

- The TBWI and TBWP continued to refine the scoping document for the Liberty Ranch project under Objective 2. This project is envisioned to provide temporary storage for up to 100,000 AF of floodwater off the South Kings, Kaweah, and Tule Rivers. With the uncertainty of climate change and effects in the Tulare Lake Basin, accommodation of high flood flows may also lessen impacts to communities and agricultural lands off the North Kings River in communities such as Mendota and Firebaugh. (Task 6.1)
- The AWC will convene a group of upper watershed managers, lower watershed resource managers/stakeholders and researchers and scientists on February 25, 2014 with the objective to initiate watershed-level planning and problem-solving through a process based on sound science and social need. (Task 6.1)
- West Hills Resource Management Planning is underway with the WRCD to address climate change and integrated resource management in Western Fresno County (see Work Plan Objective #3 above). (Task 6.1)
- The newly redesigned TBWP website ([www.tularebasinwildlifepartners.org](http://www.tularebasinwildlifepartners.org)) hosts its four conservation plans, including the Tulare Basin Riparian and Wildlife Corridor Conservation Report, which identifies 16 key corridors connecting conservation areas and surrounding landscapes. (Task 6.1)

**Work Plan Objective #7: Ensure stakeholder support of the Watershed Coordinator's efforts through twelve-month reports by the Watershed Coordinator to the Tulare Basin IRWM Coordination Group (TB IRWMC, composed of lead representatives of the seven Tulare Basin IRWM groups) and to the Tulare Basin Working Group (TBWG), soliciting evaluation and consensus recommendations concerning the optimal organizational and funding basis for continuing the position beyond March 2014; the end result benefit to the watershed of this objective will be achievement of stakeholder consensus on the value of continuing the position, with post-grant optimal organizational platform agreed upon, and the need for funding continuity and long-term sustainability agreed upon.**

*Performance Measurement:* Completed twelve-month reports by the WC and performance evaluations by the TB IRWVG and TBWG, with summary reports (including summaries of reports to DOC) posted on the TBWP website.

Completed measures and outcomes addressed:

- The TBWI team designed and distributed an online survey on February 14 to request TBWI partners and stakeholders to evaluate TBWI activities and accomplishments through the three-year DOC grant period. The survey also seeks input from respondents about where/how to focus TBWI efforts in the next phase of our work. We look forward to analyzing the survey results and reporting our analysis to the DOC in our final report. (The survey is available online at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/YLXZHNN>. The survey questions are also available on the enclosed CD.) (Tasks 7.1, 7.2, 7.3)
- The WC and TBWI Core Team members participated regularly in the seven IRWVG group meetings and sub-committees, presented information on TBWI progress and plans, made useful contributions and received helpful feedback. (Tasks 7.1, 7.2, 7.3)

**Work Plan Objective #8: Coordinate with the TBWP, TB IRWVG, TBWG participants and other interested parties to secure funding for the continuation and sustainability of the position after the end of the grant; the end result benefit to the watershed will be continued integration of environmental components in water and flood control projects in the Tulare Basin.**

*Performance Measurement:* Secure a minimum commitment of funds for two additional years, with a long-term funding strategy for ten years or more.

Completed measures and outcomes addressed:

- BLM/Bakersfield-TBWP Cooperative Agreement Amendment: through this \$36,000 amendment (effective November 25, 2013) to the existing Cooperative Agreement for “Friends of Atwell Island” capacity- building, the WC will assist the Atwell Island Project Manager with the transition from BOR Land Retirement Program funding to sustainable short and long-term BLM funding, involving solutions to water management issues and creation of an annual agricultural income stream of \$150,000 - \$200,000. (Task 8.1).
- The WC attended meetings with FRF, SGC, Conservation Strategy Group and others regarding continuation of funding for the WC beyond the May 18, 2014 DOC grant end date. (Task 8.1)
- The WC participated in preparation of position descriptions for Co-share WCs to accompany funding proposals. (Tasks 8.1)
- Dave Clendenen, Vollmar Natural Lands Consultig (VNLC) has joined the TBWI team as Co-share WC for the second phase of the Tulare Basin Watershed Initiative (2014-2016). (Task 8.1)
- On October 23, the TBWP Executive Director (ED) submitted an LOI to the California Water Foundation (CWF) requesting support for continuation of funding for the Tulare Basin WC after May 2014. Follow up occurred after October 31, January 6 and February 11 updates to CWF by the TBWP ED, at which time Resources Legacy Fund (RLF) staff responded with a request for a meeting with Kate Williams, CWF Program Manager, now set for March 3, 2014 at the RLF office in Sacramento. The TBWP ED and the co-WCs plan to provide a presentation on the goals and objectives of the next phase of the TBWI with specific emphasis on regional watershed ecosystem restoration projects to enhance

regional self-sufficiency and climate change adaptation capacity during conditions of drought, flood, or “normal” times. Pending the outcome of the discussions with CWF, our work plan for the period following the expected end of this grant (May 18, 2014) will focus on project implementation to improve the health of Tulare Basin watershed(s) through riparian corridor ecosystem restoration, stormwater management and ground water replenishment. (Task 8.1)

**3. New funding obtained from the Grant Start Date through this reporting period**

Grant proposals submitted to date:

Table 1: Grant proposals submitted throughout the grant

Program Name	Funding Entity & Type	Funding Source	Purpose	Requested Amount	Status	Award Amount	Award Date
Lawrence Foundation	P	General	Cash match support for WC operating costs	\$10,000	N	N/A	N/A
NRCS	F	WRP	Cash match support, funds Assistant WC functions in 2012	\$27,500	F	\$27,500	8/12/11
FWS Central Valley Joint Venture (CVJV)	F	Mig. Bird Prog.	Cash match support, operating costs, TBWI updated brochure	\$1,189.08	F	\$1,189.08	8/16/11
			Wetland Tour vans	\$675.00	F	\$675.00	3/30/12
Heller Charitable Foundation	P	Environment & Health	Cash match support, WC operating expenses	\$12,870	N	N/A	N/A
BLM-Bakersfield Regional Office	F	Healthy Lands Initiative	Cash match support, TBWI Web site, communications/out reach (TBWP-BLM Coop Agr'mnt increase)	\$27,000	F	\$27,000	8/17/11
Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)	P	Fresno Office Gov't Rel.s	Cash match support, WC operating expenses	\$3,000	F	\$3,000	7/21/11
Fresno Regional Foundation	P	Environment program	Cash match support, TBWI Web site, COS functions	\$7,700	N	N/A	N/A
Wick Kenny Foundation	P	Watershed	Cash match support, WC operating expenses	\$5,000	F	\$5,000	1/5/12
Southern Cal Edison (SCE)	P	Environment	Cash match support, WC operating expenses	\$5,000	F	\$2,500	1/12/12
Heller Charitable Foundation	P	Environment & Health	Cash match support, TBWI website	\$23,000	N	N/A	N/A
Constellation Energy Eco State	P	Environment	Cash match support, COS functions	\$5,000	N	\$5,000	N/A
NFWF/Wells Fargo	P	Healthy Communities	Pre-proposal for TBWI Website	\$45,000	N	N/A	N/A
NRCS	F	WRP	Cash match support, funds Assistant WC functions in 2013	\$27,500	F	\$27,500	8/8/12
PG&E	P	Fresno Gov't Rel.s	Cash match support, COS functions	\$5,000	F	\$5,000	8/11/12

S.D. Bechtel Fund	P	Environment & Water Program	TBWI website upgrades and maintenance	\$62,000	P		
BOR	F	CVPCP	Acquisition for Pixley NWR, SW Tulare Co Watershed Focus Area	\$885,100	F	\$448,000 (initial funding)	5/5/13
BOR	F	CVPCP	Additions funds for Pixley NWR Acquisition	NA	F	\$200,000	9/15/13
Fresno Regional Foundation	P	Environment	DAC Roundtable support	\$15,000	N	NA	NA
Kenney Brothers Foundation	P	Watershed	Cash match support for WC operating expenses	\$5,000	F	\$5,000	12/12
Heller Foundation	P	Environment & Health	TBWI – Interactive Mapping	\$23,000	N	NA	NA
Roll Global Request	P	General	TBWI general supports	\$5,000	N	NA	NA
PG&E	P	Fresno Gov't Rel.s	Cash match, COS functions in support of TBWI/DAC	\$5,000	F	\$5,000	6/4/13
Southern Cal Edison (SCE)	P	Edison Int'l	Collaborating for Sustainable Solutions in Rural Communities Program	\$10,000	F	\$10,000	8/12/13
BLM	F	Coop, agr'mnt	Friends of Atwell Island Project	\$80,000	F	\$27,000	6/28/13
BLM	F	Coop agr'mnt add-on	Transition of Atwell Island Land retirement project	\$36,000	F	\$36,000	11/25/13
Carole Combs	P	Donation	Cash match support, TBWP/TBWI brochure reprint	\$1,095	F	\$1,095	4/11/13
NRCS Contrib Agreement	F	CA WRP	DOC TBWI match Jan –May 2014	\$18,000	N	NA	NA
CWF	P	Watershed	TBWI/WC June 2014 – May 2017; updated February 2014: WC Co-Share July '14 – June '15	(\$300,000) \$138,600	P		
Fresno Regional Foundation	P	Environment	Tulare Basin Regional Land Use and Natural Res integration	\$19,000	F	\$19,000	12/17/13
BOR	F	CVPCP	Westhills RMP, Restoration W. Fresno Co. Stream Groups	\$197,500	P		

WRCD	P	General	CARCD conference registration & lodging	\$981.20	F	\$981.20	11/13-16/13
William and Flora Hewlet Foundation Western Conservation Program	P	General	General TBWI Support	\$60,000	P		
Heller Charitable Foundation	P	Environment	Tulare Basin Regional Land Use and Nat Res integration (LUNRI)	\$17,500	P		
<b>Cumulative Total</b>				<b>\$1,784,210.20</b>		<b>\$856,440.28</b>	

a. New non-grant funding obtained to date.

Table 2: New non-grant funding obtained throughout the grant					
Program Name	Funding Entity & Type	Funding Source	Purpose	Amount Received	Date Received
FWS CVJV	Grant Agr'mnt Mod.	Migratory Bird Program	Funded Conservation Strategy Group Consulting September 2011- August 2012, assisted WC and Core Team with funding and project implementation strategies	\$36,000	8/11/11
RollGiving	Employee contrib	Olsen/Paramount Farms; MG	General Support	\$300	12/12
1% for the Planet/RollGiving	Employee contrib	Donation	General Support	\$400	1/13
TWS SJV Chapter	Contrib	Donation	General Support	\$250	1/13
Kings-Tulare CFC	P	Employee Contrib	General Support	\$122.98, \$69.04 \$56.48	10/12, 2/4/13 6/26/13
Fresno-Madera CFC	P	Employee Contrib	General Support	\$25.11 \$208.55	4/13 7/18/13
William Loudermilk, Conservation Solutions	P	TBWP Advisor	General Support	\$1,000.00 \$200.00 \$500.00	10/5/12 7/3/13 11/27/13
David Mitchell	P	TBWP BOD	General Support	\$100.00	7/18/13
Richard Moss	P	TBWP BOD	General Support	\$100.00	10/17/13
Thomas Stanton	P	TBWP BOD	General Support	\$100.00	11/27/13
Fresno-Madera CFC	P	Employee Contrib	General Support	\$124.72 \$133.21	10/28/13 2/7/14
Kings -Tulare CFC	P	Employee Contrib	General Support	\$55.23 71.13	10/31/13 2/7/14
<b>Cumulative Total</b>				<b>\$ 38,816.33</b>	

**4. Include final copies of outreach materials and other products created during the reporting period. Submit photos in digital format on CD.**

The CD enclosed with the original copy of this Report includes:

- Alpaugh-Allensworth News Bulletin in English and Spanish
- BLM Atwell Island Bird Tour Poster
- Liberty Ranch Statement of Work
- Survey Questions
- E-new (PDF)

The TBWI website is available at: [www.tularebasinwatershed.org](http://www.tularebasinwatershed.org).

**5. If applicable, describe any problems or setbacks related to the implementation of the grant or the work plan.**

On February 14-16, 2014 a team of agency and non-profit organization biologists reviewed deep disking that had occurred at the site of previous pristine “Guernsey Valley Sink/Saltgrass Grassland” -- on five parcels (1,840 acres) south of Kansas Avenue in Kings County. The TBWP had included these parcels in its 2010 Riparian and Wildlife Corridor Conservation Plan for DFW/WCB recommending high priority action; the project area is included in the TBWP Conceptual Projects List (updated October 2013, posted on the TBWP website) under the Kansas Avenue-Guernsey Wildlife Corridor description, which states that the total 3,765-acre project area is highly fragmented, requiring significant restoration on adjacent farmed lands to link the fragments and “. . . encompasses some of the highest quality upland habitat in the Tulare Basin.” Such habitat destruction can happen wherever a landowner wishes, in effect, as no regulations are in place to prevent it. We presume that the landowner intends to rely on groundwater (highly problematic) for nut trees.

As a result of drought conditions, CVPIA Level 4 zero delivery and greatly diminished Level 2 water delivery, the Kern National Wildlife Refuge expects a serious decline in wetland habitat during the coming months. Tulare Basin duck clubs and wetland areas protected and restored by Ducks Unlimited and California Waterfowl Association are struggling to identify solutions for “new water” in order to avoid the use of precious groundwater resources -- to keep some portion of the wetland habitat they manage in reasonable condition.

A significant number of Tulare Basin water districts are engaged in in-fighting over water rights rather than adapting to drought conditions and collaborating.

The TBWP-TBWI views the drought as a challenge and opportunity. We are attempting to facilitate short and long-term solutions that align with the California Water Action Plan. Our Quarter 12 report to DOC will include more information regarding expected next steps.

**6. Within 30 days of the end of the quarter, submit one hard copy and one electronic copy (in MS Word; no PDF files) of this completed quarterly report to your assigned grant administrator.**